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Tass Charges Spymaster Story Is False

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MOSCOW (UPI) — The Soviet Union denied "from beginning to end" Sunday the story about an alleged Soviet spymaster who defected to the United States and gave away the names of a Soviet spy ring working in West Germany.

West German officials recently announced the arrest of five men and women on charges of spying for the Soviet Union. The officials said the five had been named by their former Soviet spymaster, Lt. Col. Yevgeny Runge, who had defected to America.

The day following the West German announcement U.S. State Department officials in Washington confirmed that Runge defected to American officials in Germany and had been the key Soviet spy who tipped off the names of his spy ring in West Germany.

"The story about Lt. Col. Runge is false from beginning to end," the Soviet news agency Tass said Sunday.

"Some time ago the United States Department of State announced that Soviet Lt. Col. Yevgeny Runge had come to the Federal (West) German Republic and asked for political asylum in America.

"Tass has been instructed to state that Runge never served either in the Soviet army or in the Soviet Union's security bodies."

A short time before the Runge episode, the Soviet Union let it be known that a former British agent had worked for the Soviet Union for 30 years before fleeing to Moscow.

British newspapers printed reports that Harold Philby had been a double agent for 30 years, including the time he was chief liaison man in Washington between British intelligence and the American Central Intelligence Agency.

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